

WHETHER COMMON OR NOT.

Waiting

Steel rod oiled and polished
And the reel is running free;
Lines have all been tested—
Box of tackle good to see,
Waiting for the signal
Now to take the train and go
A fishing in Lake Ida,
Where the

Big
Bass
Grow.

Charley Bidman waiting
With the minnows for my hooks;
Overalls and straw hat—
Comfort takes the place of looks.
Rocky Point is waiting,
And the waves wash soft and low
Along the shores of Ida
Where the

Big
Bass
Grow.

Breezes softly blowing
O'er the waters cool and deep;
Song birds sweetly singing
Where woodland shadows creep—
It's hard upon a fellow
Waiting for the day to go
A fishing in Lake Ida
Where the

Big
Bass
Grow.

A Piteful Pleat.

To the Editor of the Housewife's Home Comfort: As a husband and a father I have a complaint to make concerning your journal, and others of the same class. And I am not alone in this complaint, although I may be the first to voice it. Pray bear me with me while I unload my burden of grief upon you.

My wife—the best and sweetest woman in this or any other city—is the victim of a fad. Her fad is woman's journals. She subscribes to something less than a score and considerably more than a dozen, and it is because she takes everything in earnest that she sees in them that I come now with my tale of woe.

Up until a few months ago she was content to cook and serve meals just like her mother did before her. But in an evil moment she conceived the idea of following a weekly schedule of menus outlined in your family journal. You know what I mean. One of those schedules where you give a lot of recipes for three meals a day for seven consecutive days, preceded by a little note to the effect that the schedule provides a way of living on \$1.73 a week for a family of five and have some left over to lend to the neighbors. There are five in my family, including myself, and I don't amount to much around the house save on salary day.

When she saw that fatal line, "For a family of five," she succumbed. She began with breakfast Monday morning. It was a good breakfast, although I never did like oatmeal. Luncheon was also good, even if made up chiefly of stuff the grocer sells in cans. But dinner was a dream of gastronomic joy. The good wife followed the schedule in every particular, and I ate so much I dreamed of pink cows and blue snakes and green hobgoblins all night. Tuesday's breakfast was a

slight change for the better, and luncheon was immense. Tuesday's dinner was another dream of gastronomic joy, but profiting by experience I curbed my appetite. Wednesday's breakfast and luncheon were still further improvements, but when I pushed back from the dinner table Wednesday evening the good wife hauled out a little account book and pored over the figures for a minute. Then she said:

"My dear, I have faithfully followed the schedule I cut out of the Housewife's Home Comfort. It said this sort of thing would cost us \$1.73 a week, but including dinner this evening I have spent just \$21.87, not counting the gas. Could you persuade your employer to advance you a week's salary so I can follow the schedule up until next Sunday evening?"

Now I submit to you, my dear sir, that this is a confidence game deserving of severe condemnation. We figured it out that evening, and we discovered that your schedule instead of costing \$1.73 a week for a family of five, would really cost \$48.93.

But this is not all. We have been considering the idea of building a home of our own for some time. We have taken note of all the architectural designs published in your journal and others of a like class. Most of them are for houses costing from \$7,500 to \$28,763. One design was of a "handsome and cheap cottage" that you say will cost "only \$4,500." The man who would speak of a "handsome and cheap" cottage costing \$4,500 either lives in an attic room or a brown stone front on Fifth avenue. I am not prepared to say which. But a month or so ago you, in a spirit of forgetfulness, published the design of a cottage costing \$1,800, including the plumbing, a walled cellar, a dinky gargoyle or two and a lot of gingerbread on the roof. We thought it quite a beauty, and were inclined to believe that by dispensing with the gargoyles, gingerbread and a part of the plumbing we could get it down to about \$1,500. We sent for the plans and submitted them to a contractor, asking for bids on it just as the plans showed, and also for bids on the plans, minus the gargoyles and gingerbread. He said he would build the house as shown by the plans for \$3,100, and for \$2,975 without the ornamentation. We are still renting.

Could you not furnish us with the plans of a cottage estimated—by you—to cost about \$350? Wife and I have come to the conclusion that by building a \$350 cottage on a Housewife's Home Comfort plan we can manage to keep within the \$1,200 we can raise for building purposes.

Wife and I are not much on society, but occasionally we go out among friends, and when we do we try to make a good appearance. My dress suit is becoming somewhat old, but it is good for three or four more seasons. But every so often the wife insists on having a new frock, and I never complain. I want her to dress

well. But this dressmaking business came near bankrupting us. Last month she began discussing the new dress problem, and just as she was growing excited about it the Housewife's Home Comfort showed up. That was our undoing. Behold, it had the plans and specifications for building an evening dress that appeared—judging by the model—to be a dream of beauty. In the picture it fitted the woman like the paper on the wall. Of course the woman in the picture was not built like any woman I ever saw, being shaped like a harpoon hook, with a waist about seven inches in circumference and a spine curved like a republican politician's record. The wife is small, and slender, but the plans and specifications showed how to make the dress fit women like her. The estimated cost was \$13.99. Armed with the plans and specifications she went down town and purchased the goods. When she came back the bill for the material showed a total of \$22.17, and she still was shy the buttons, something she calls illusion and stuff known to the initiated as skirt binding. She grabbed the scissors, the tapeline and a paper of pins, and began cutting, measuring and pinning. She was at it when I left in the morning and at it when I got home at night. She kept it up for a week, save when she jaunted down town to get a little material actually needed, but not shown in the specifications. Finally the dress was completed. I have no complaints to make about its looks. It is really a handsome dress, and it fits well. But I have a complaint to make concerning the cost. Instead of costing \$13.99 it cost \$38.50, a week of hard work, numerous cold meals and a lot of red-hot thoughts. I will stand for the extra work, the discomfort and the thoughts, but I submit that in all justice you owe me \$24.51, which you may remit by draft, money orders, stamps, check, postal note or express order.

A few nights ago the baby became slightly ill. The drug store was open, but the doctor was not at home. The wife hunted up a few back numbers of the Housewife's Home Comfort and searched until she found something in the "Home Physician" department that seemed to fit the baby's case. It said to get a certain lotion and bathe the baby therein. I hiked down to the drug store and secured the stuff, and the wife bathed the baby. It may be all right, but I doubt it. The baby looks like a boiled lobster and the tender skin is peeling off wherever that stuff touched it. Is that what you wanted it to do? If it is, you have succeeded, but it's almighty tough on the baby.

Now, I want to ask a few favors of you. Please don't give us any more of those \$1.73-a-week-for-a-family-of-five recipes until you have tried it yourself. It's too expensive experimenting with 'em out here in the west. Please don't print any more plans of "cheap and handsome cottages costing \$15,000." A fifteen-thousand-dollar house is a mansion out here, even if it is a "cheap cottage" in the neighborhood of the Housewife's Home Comfort office. If you are a man, have

your wife try your "\$13.99-for-a-hand-some-evening-dress" plans for herself before springing them on the wives of us poor toilers. If you are a woman mend the error of your ways.

And if you have any more recipes for ailing babies try 'em on your own offspring before printing them. If they parboil your babies it may save our babies much suffering.

Please give this letter consideration. It comes from the bottom of a heart full of woe. Yours in trouble,

A WEARY HUSBAND.

P. S. That complexion wash you printed in the June number may be all right in some cases, but it made my wife's face look like a war map of Europe smitten with a chunk of raw beef.

A. W. H.

Dic. W. M. M.

With the Paragraphers.

We are anxious to know who is to be the future keeper of the elephant, Hanna or Oxnard.—Memphis (Tenn.) News.

Except in those portions where more or less fighting is going on daily, the Philippine islands are said to be completely pacified.—Milwaukee (Wis.) News.

After Admiral Dewey's declaration the American eagle can no longer afford to do any screaming over the battle of Manila.—Boston (Mass.) Traveler.

The Philippine bill debate was long drawn out and only one republican was converted. Verily they are a hard-hearted and a stiff-necked lot.—Nashville (Tenn.) News.

By the way, gentlemen of the republican press, what has become of that trust busting weapon hurled at the packers by Attorney General Knox?—Dubuque (Ia.) Telegraph-Herald.

Dewey seems very anxious to conciliate the national administration. He well knows how to go about it, as was shown by his testimony before the Philippine senatorial committee.—Joplin (Mo.) Globe.

After all Whitelaw Reid is to come home without having a chance to wear his coronation breeches, but he has the satisfaction of knowing he can leave them to his family as an heirloom.—San Francisco (Cal.) Call.

The republicans have passed a lot of good laws this session. That is, they passed by the laws, but the laws were not passed by them. The English language is a funny thing sometimes, isn't it?—Memphis (Tenn.) News.

A man arrested at the White house as a crank declares that he has "the power of telling where Uncle Sam is being robbed." There are lots of that kind of cranks in Washington, but they are shrewd enough to keep quiet about it.—Philadelphia (Pa.) Public Ledger.

Thirty-two thousand dollars' worth of coffins in which to bury American soldiers are being sent to Manila by the transport Kilpatrick. That is \$4,000 more than all the exports to Manila in May, therefore elucidating clearly that trade "follows the flag."—Buffalo (N. Y.) Courier.